

Consumer startup community Life+ Collective launches grant for underrepresented founders

Founders from underrepresented backgrounds do not have access to typical tech networks, and struggle to raise money from traditional routes, including VCs. Now, Life+ Collective hopes to help founders overcome the funding barriers standing in the way of their businesses and ideas through the launch of its new grant programme.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Life+ has announced a new grant programme for underrepresented founders. Using funding from Isomer Capital, The Life+ Collective grant programme will offer grants of up to £20K to 7 founding teams at pre-seed and seed stage.

The equity free money will be used to help the business experiment and drive forward progress. In addition to cash, Life+ will offer 3 months of wraparound support to the companies, including guidance from workshop mentors such as CEO of Black Girl Festival and angel investor Nicole Crentstil, and performance coach Freddie Birley.

Bringing diversity to consumer tech

The programme is aiming to bring new B2C founders into consumer tech in an inclusive way, by providing founders who would otherwise be excluded from the conversation with enough cash to kickstart their business.

Bringing new ideas and voices to the table and carving a pathway into the B2C industry for entrepreneurs from under-represented backgrounds will push the entire industry forward.

Aware the founders from underrepresented backgrounds do not have access to typical tech networks, Life+ is keen to source the applicants from the broadest possible pool. Developing partnerships with organisations that have deep and relevant networks, such as Black Ballad and *Diversity VC*, as well as universities within and outside of London, and various mentor networks, will help push this agenda.

Savs Tan, Co-Founder of The Life+ Collective said, “Europe hasn’t cracked consumer tech yet. There are many factors at play. One is that the continent doesn’t yet possess the networks and expertise to push the consumer sector forward, nor do founders have a place to share learnings and lessons.”

“So many potentially brilliant founders are excluded from starting companies in the first place. It can still be prohibitively expensive to start a company and some founders don’t have the option to bootstrap. Our experience has shown us that many founders who are building consumer companies happen to be women or non-binary. These people regularly struggle to raise money from traditional VCs. With this in mind, imagine the number of companies that haven’t come to exist because of network, cash, and therefore the ability to experiment is not possible? That’s what we hope to address.”

Happiness first

In the ‘move-fast-and-break-things’ world of tech innovation, it is easy to forget that a diverse pool of real users will interact with the solution when it reaches the market. Ensuring happiness is a huge part of consumer-facing innovation is now a key priority of the programme.

Making the experience simple and joyful will ensure that the product spreads happiness. From a business perspective, this is far more attractive to potential users.

"We need to remember that consumer-facing innovations are used by people, not robots nor corporations," Tan continued. "We need to make sure that the teams developing these technologies put users at the centre of their processes when they're creating new products, and the businesses that deliver them."

Companies wishing to apply for grant funding can do so by applying [here](#) before the end of July 2021.

Article by Maddyne UK